

CLAIMS

We claim:

- 5 1. In a vehicle comprising a first device and a second device and an active network communicatively coupling the first device and the second device, wherein the active network is configured to provide a plurality of communication paths between the first device and the second device, and wherein a communication path of the plurality of communication paths includes a loop.
- 10 2. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a plurality of active network elements coupled by connection media.
3. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements
- 15 comprises switches.
4. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises bridges.
- 20 5. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises routers.
6. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network is a packet data network.

7. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the loop couples a first active network element of the plurality of active network elements to a second active network element of the plurality of active network elements.

5 8. The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop has a loop data rate different than a path data rate of the communication paths.

9. The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop comprises an active network element.

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10. The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the loop comprises a plurality of active network elements.

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11. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the loop connects the first device and the second device.

12. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a multi-drop topology.

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13. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a ring topology.